

The Name of Jesus -- Matthew 1:20 & 21

How did you come by your name? Who named you? Why were you given the name you bear? My mother's sister-in-law, who was more like a **sister** to her than a sister-in-law, suggested my first name, **Lyle**. It was a good choice, a wise choice, because for the past 70 plus years, that is what most people have chosen to call me. I won't volunteer to tell you what **else** some people have called me! What does your name mean? Very few of us even know! The name **Lyle** is of Old French origin ... meaning "from the island."

Dr. Vail, a young college professor, went to his pastor with the news that he & wife was expecting a new little baby boy. He asked his pastor to suggest some good Bible names they could give to their son. After giving it some thought, the pastor suggested the name "Noah" a good Bible name; "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." The professor surprised his pastor by emphatically saying that was not a good suggestion. The name of **Noah Vail** just did not have a good sound to it!

Parents today seldom choose a name for their child because of its **meaning**; they pick one that reminds them of a friend or a relative; or they select it because it has a combination of syllables that is pleasing to the ears. In olden times a name meant something, & that is still the case with many of the Native Americans; names like Kill Deer, Eagle Eye, Buffalo Face, Red Cloud, are all names that tell something of the facial expressions & characteristics of the person. Most nicknames we hear indicate some peculiarity, or trait of character, & frequently are more nearly right than the given names. As for family names, all of them have their origin in something -- & in olden times meant something.

All Bible names have meaning! In the Bible there are 256 names given just to the Son of God! His name is infinitely more than any one name could express! But no name is **more beautiful** than the name of **Jesus**! The naming of the Christ Child was no accident, nor an after-thought. It was God the Father, Who knew Him best, Who named Him **Jesus**, & explained the meaning of that wonderful name. When it was time for God to clothe His Son in humanity, God said to an angel: "When you go down to see Joseph, you make sure to tell him **the baby's name is Jesus.**" **The name of Jesus was registered in Heaven long before it was given on earth!**

So an angel stepped into Joseph's consciousness through the medium of a dream, & delivered a divine message. We read about it in **Matthew 1:20 & 21**, how "the angel of the Lord appeared unto (Joseph) in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, & thou shall call his name **Jesus**: for he shall save his people from their sins." This was a divinely inspired message from the angel to Joseph. Therefore the naming of the Christ Child "**Jesus**" was an **act of obedience** on the part of Joseph & Mary.

Today, over 2000 years later, the name of Jesus is honey in the mouth; melody in the ear; & joy in the heart. Why is this? **Why is the name Jesus so significant?** I would like to suggest some reasons **why** the name Jesus is so important to so many, many people; people all around the world: --

1. Jesus Is an Easy Name!

There are some people I know who have names that are rather **difficult** to pronounce: names like Szekelyhi, Danijelowich, Wictihouski, etc. There are some names which are rather difficult, or almost impossible for me to

even pronounce. In the Old Testament there are names of Assyrian kings & others, that I in all honesty make no attempt to pronounce.

Because of an early childhood speech impediment, I was nearly eight years old before I could pronounce my own name, Lyle, clearly enough for people to understand! I still have trouble with many words which others find easy to pronounce. Aren't you glad that God didn't choose a **difficult name** in which to call His only begotten Son? Can you imagine what some of the worship/praise chorus would be like if God had chosen a name for His Son that was hard, or difficult to pronounce?

He, Who is King of kings & Lord's of lord, might lawfully have taken some **high-sounding name**, but He did not do so. He was given a **common name** of the **common people**, for He came to identify Himself with common people. The name of **Jesus** is so easy to say, only two syllables, five letters, & pronounced the same in almost any language. Even a child can learn to say it.

Have you ever noticed that children think Jesus is the answer to every question? A pastor was telling a children's story, & described a little furry animal with a big bushy tail, that climbed trees, eat nuts, & saves acorns. He asked the children: "What am I describing?" One little boy raised his hand & said: "**It sounds like a squirrel but I know the right answer is Jesus.**" God has given us a **Savior** whose name is so simple & easy that even a child can learn to say it! "**His name shall be called Jesus.**"

2. Jesus Is an Enduring Name.

Our Lord Jesus was born in obscurity about 2000 years ago. He died like a common criminal at the age of thirty three. Yet His name is the **most well known name** in the history of the world! We pass it on from age to age, in printed page & spoken word. **It is the most wonderful name in all the world.**

Socrates taught for 40 years; Plato taught for 50 years; Aristotle for 40 years; **& Jesus taught for only 3 years.** Yet the **influence** of Jesus' three year ministry, by far transcends the impact left by the combined 130 years of the teachings from these men who were among the greatest philosophers of all the ages.

Jesus never painted a picture, yet some of the finest artist of this world received their inspiration from Jesus. **Jesus wrote no poetry**, but Milton, Cowper & scores of the world's greatest poets were inspired by Him. **Jesus composed no music**, still Beethoven, Handel, Bach & others reached their highest perfection of melody in the hymns & symphonies they composed in His praise. **Jesus** never established a **college**, nor built a **hospital**, yet schools & hospitals around the world are teaching & giving care in His name!

In the spoken portion of that beautiful song: "*There Is Something About That Name*" the writer says: "**Emperors have tried to destroy it; philosophies have tried to stamp it out; tyrants have tried to wash it from the face of the earth with the very blood of those who claimed it. Yet still it stands, & there shall be that final day when every voice that has ever uttered a sound, every voice of Adam's race shall rise in one mighty chorus to proclaim the name of Jesus, for in that day 'every knee shall bow & every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.'**"

3. Jesus Is an Esteemed Name!

Many names bring pleasant associations to mind, but **only One name sets our hearts aglow!** There are many

wonderful names & titles ascribed to Christ through out the Bible: Wonderful Counselor, The mighty God, The Prince of Peace, Emmanuel, Helper, Messiah, The Righteous Judge, Rose of Sharon, Sun of Righteousness. **But the sweetest name of all is Jesus!** The name of Jesus is sweet & precious to the Christian. The name of Jesus is encouraging to heavy-laden sinners.

*There is a name I love to hear; -- I love to sing its worth.
It sounds like music in mine ear, -- the sweetest name on earth.
It tells me of a Savior's love -- Who died to set me free.
It tells me of His precious blood, -- the sinner's perfect plea.
O how I love Jesus! -- O how I love Jesus! O how I love Jesus, -- because He first loved me!*

*Jesus, Jesus, Jesus! -- There's something about that name.
Master, Savior, Jesus! -- Like the fragrance after the rain.
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus! -- Let all heaven & earth proclaim:
King & kingdoms will all pass away, But there's something about that name!*

*His name is wonderful. -- His name is wonderful
His name is wonderful -- Jesus, my Lord.
He's the great Shepherd, -- the Rock of all ages, Almighty God is He.
Bow down before Him; -- Love & adore Him. His name is wonderful -- Jesus, my Lord!*

*All hail the power of Jesus' name! -- Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the royal di-a-dem, -- & crown Him Lord of all.*

*Take the name of Jesus with you, -- child of sorrow & of woe.
It will joy & comfort give you; -- take it, then, wher-e'er you go.
Precious name, o how sweet! -- Hope of earth & joy of heav'n
Precious name, o how sweet! -- Hope of earth & joy of heav'n*

4. Jesus Is an Exclusive Name!

When the angel said to Joseph: "You shall call his name Jesus," the angel added a **qualifying phrase to set the name apart**: "For he shall save his people from their sins." He is not the only man who bore the name of Jesus, **but He is the only man who ever fully lived up to that name!** The Scriptures affirm without qualification that, "there is none other name given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The very heart & purpose of His coming was that He might **save his people from their sins! This is His special office!** He is the only One Who has the **power** to save us! Only Jesus Christ can break the enslaving chains of sin & Satan! He alone can speak peace to the human heart, strengthen the weak & give life to those who are spiritually dead!

Jesus is a very encouraging name to weighted-down sinners. Those seeking salvation may draw near to the Father with boldness, & have access with confidence through Jesus Christ. It is His role, & His delight to show mercy. "For God didn't send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him" (John 3:17).

Never has there been a **time** in the history of the world that the need for salvation seemed as great as it is today! Crime, drunkenness, drugs, sexual perversion, dishonesty, lying cheating, coveting, thievery, rape & murder, **are at their worst!**

War is not limited to Middle East; war is rampant throughout the world, & the sounds of Armageddon is in our ears. The loss of the values of our Western civilization sneers at us with no attempt at disguise. America has lost it's soul! It seems that we have turned our backs on such things as honor, decency, integrity, & Christian charity! **But the hope of the world still lives, & the light of Christmas still shines!** Glory to God in the highest comes ringing down through the ages: **Jesus saves!**

Jesus saves us from the guilt of sin. Jesus saves us from the dominion of sin. Jesus saves us from the presence of sin. Jesus saves us from the consequences of sin. No wonder we can shout: "Hallelujah, what a Savior!" Jesus is a name which is especially sweet & precious to believers. It has given them what money cannot buy, that is, inward peace. It has eased their wearied consciences & given rest to their heavy hearts.

The Song of Solomon describes the experience of many when it says, "Your name is oil poured forth" (Song of Solomon 1:3). Happy indeed is the person who trusts not merely in vague notions of God's mercy & goodness, but in "Jesus." This is the message for the hour! Not the evolution of man, but the incarnation of God! Not some pseudo-deliverance by human brains, but the real salvation by divine grace! **A Savior Who really saves us from sin!**

It is not because of His power, His miracles, or even His teachings, that we esteem His name!
We love the name of Jesus because of our redemption! In all our thought about the Baby Jesus this Christmas, let us never lose sight of the truth that **He whose birth we commemorate is above all else our Savior!**

According to this birth announcement from the angel, Jesus is to save His people **from** their sins, & not **in** their sins! Jesus does not merely save us from the **penalty** of sin, He saves us from the **practice** of sin! He is an efficient & a sufficient Savior; One Who can save & deliver us **from** our sins! Praise be to God!

Conclusion: As glorious & beautiful & meaningful as this name of Jesus is, the **personal revelation** of Jesus to your **heart & life** is even more meaningful! The historical event of Jesus' coming is incomplete until He has come personally into **your heart** as Savior & Lord! The salvation He came to provide must be **individually appropriated!** Christ was born **FOR** us that He might be born **IN** us!

I make a **personal plea** with you today, that **YOU** may know the meaning & the significance of this name, **Jesus**, within your heart, know His **forgiveness** of your sins! Know His **salvation** in your life! Know Him **personally**, love Him, serve Him, **experience Him for yourself!**

My friends, Salvation is not in the Baptist Church; it's not in the Methodist Church; it's not in the Catholic Church, or the Charismatic Church. **Salvation is in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!** If you are not trusting in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, your trust is misplaced! You are going to end up in a place where you do not want to go!

A Poet has written it this way: --
There is majesty in the name God.
There is personality in the name Jehovah.
There is power in the name Lord.

There is unction in the name Christ.
There is fondness in the name Immanuel.
There is intercession in the name Mediator.
There is help in the name Advocate.
But there is salvation in none other,
None under heaven given among men,
Apart from the name **Jesus**.

An Alexander may build an empire.
A Napoleon may change the nations of the world.
A Newton may bring about an intellectual revolution.
An Edison may create a new world of science.
A Wyatt may usher in a new era of industry.
But there is only One who can touch & transform the human heart! -- And that One is Jesus! (Author unknown).

He is the only one! When I preach Jesus from this pulpit, & people hear & open their hearts, their lives are forever changed! Can you think of anything more amazing & miraculous than that?

There are some of you here today who have tried everything else in the world. You have tried self-improvement courses, education, & support groups of all different kinds. You might be a little more sophisticated, but you are in the same mess you were in before you started. **Because there is only One Who can change your life!**

Do you know why His change works? Because He does not change you from the **outside in**; He changes you from the **inside out!** **His name is Jesus!** - Oh, how sweet the name! Experience that wonderful name for yourself today!

Rev. Lyle W. Pettit -- Calvary Baptist Church -- Benson, AZ
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